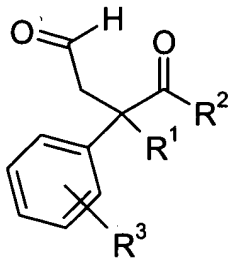
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula II:



formula II

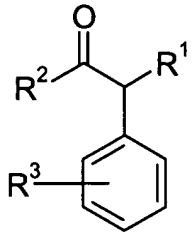
wherein

R^1 is hydrogen, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkoxy, or $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylthio;

R^2 is phenyl, naphthyl or $(C_3\text{-}C_{12})$cycloalkyl substituted with one or two substituents selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkoxy, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylthio, $(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkenyl, $(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkynyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylhalo, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkyl, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkenyl or halo;

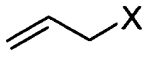
R^3 is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkoxy, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylthio, $(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkenyl, $(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkynyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylhalo, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkyl, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkenyl or halo, comprising,

treating a compound of formula III



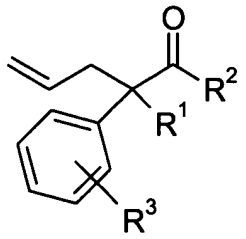
formula III

wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are described as above, with a ~~suitable~~ base and a compound of formula IV:



formula IV

wherein X is a ~~suitable~~ leaving group, to provide the compound of formula V



formula V

and oxidizing the compound of formula V with ~~a suitable~~ an oxidizing agent to provide the compound of formula II.

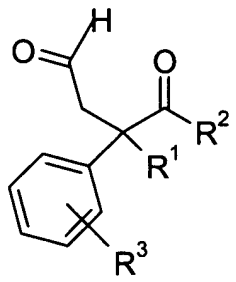
2. (Original) A process according to claim 1 wherein
R^1 is CH_3;
R^2 is cyclohexyl; and
R^3 is hydrogen.

3. (Original) A process according to claim 2 wherein
X is Br or Cl.

4. (Currently amended) A process according to claim 3 wherein the ~~suitable~~ oxidizing agent is ozone.

5. (Currently amended) A process according to claim 4 wherein the ~~suitable~~ base is potassium tert-butoxide.

6. (Currently amended) A compound of the formula:



wherein

R^1 is ~~hydrogen,~~ $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkoxy, or $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylthio;

R^2 is phenyl, naphthyl or $(C_3\text{-}C_{12})$cycloalkyl substituted with one or two substituents selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkoxy, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylthio,

$(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkenyl, $(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkynyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylhalo, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkyl, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkenyl or halo;

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkoxy, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylthio, $(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkenyl, $(C_2\text{-}C_6)$alkynyl, $(C_1\text{-}C_6)$alkylhalo, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkyl, $(C_3\text{-}C_8)$cycloalkenyl or halo.

7. (Original) A compound according to claim 6 wherein

R^1 is CH_3;

R^2 is cyclohexyl; and

R^3 is hydrogen.